



The Old Ironsides Report

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Task Force 1st AD celebrates National Hispanic Heritage Month

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1AD PAO

BAGHDAD, Iraq—Soldiers from Task Force 1st Armored Division celebrated National Hispanic Heritage Month at Baghdad International Airport Oct. 3.

President Lyndon B. Johnson started National Hispanic Heritage Month more than 30 years ago, though it was first observed for only one week during mid-September. In 1988, President Ronald Reagan extended the observance to a month and now it is celebrated from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15.

Planners, however, were forced to consolidate this year's events into a one-day celebration because of mission requirements.

"We chose one day to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month," said Sgt. 1st Class Lucia C. Cantu, an equal opportunity advisor with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1AD. "Soldiers came from all over Baghdad to celebrate, so we knew we had to make it a one-day event."

The day started off with a five-kilometer run. More than 700 soldiers participated in the run and were given free t-shirts upon finishing.

Later that day, a luncheon was held at the Bob Hope Dining Facility. Soldiers enjoyed a lunch of traditional Hispanic food and listened to guest speaker Command Sgt. Maj. Jose A. Santos, 1AD 2nd Brigade CSM.

"National Hispanic Heritage Month is a wonderful opportunity to honor the culture and many contributions of Armed Forces members and civilians with a Spanish-speaking Heritage," he said. "It is the occasion for the Latino community to come together not only to celebrate our accomplishments, but also to share with the World-at-large the Hispanic diversity and pride as people."

The luncheon also featured Sgt. Juan Ortiz, an avionics radio repairman with A Company, 127th Aviation Support Battalion, and Spc. Jessica Negron, a personnel clerk with 15th Personnel Support Battalion, demonstrating three Latin dances: Salsa, Merengue, and Bachata.

"I'm really proud to be Hispanic and to be part of this whole event," said Ortiz. "I enjoy celebrating the music and the sense of unity. Hispanics are family."



Sgt. Juan Ortiz, an avionics radio repairman with A Company, 127th Aviation Support Battalion, and Spc. Jessica Negron, a personnel clerk with 15th Personnel Support Battalion, dance during the Hispanic Heritage luncheon at the Bob Hope Dining Facility Oct. 3. Ortiz and Negron demonstrated three Latin dances: Salsa, Merengue, and Bachata.

"The thing I am most proud of in the Army is our diversity," said Brig. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, Task Force 1AD commanding general. "What scares the enemy in this part of the world the most is that people with different heritages, cultures and backgrounds can live and work together."

The celebration culminated with an evening piñata party. The 1AD band kicked off the event and soldiers vied to break open two colorful piñatas filled with sweet treats.

Eventually, the music gave way to traditional Latino songs and people crowded the dance floor.

"Overall, the day was a success," said Cantu. "It was a great chance to enjoy the diversity in 1AD, but mostly I just wanted soldiers to have fun."

NEWS

Californians Stream to Vote in Recall

LOS ANGELES (AP) - The extraordinary spectacle of California's recall election drew to a close Tuesday, as voters turned out in substantial numbers to decide whether to depose Gov. Gray Davis - and perhaps replace him with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Hollywood action hero and novice politician. Davis, re-elected last November with less than 50 percent of the vote amid outrage over the state's struggling economy, fought to avoid becoming the first governor in 82 years to be recalled.

Appeals Court OKs Do-Not-Call Registry

DENVER (AP) - A federal appeals court Tuesday cleared the way for the Federal Trade Commission to operate the national do-not-call list, pending a court decision over whether the registry violates the telemarketing industry's free-speech rights. The registry started last week, but its operation had been turned over from the FTC to the Federal Communications Commission because of concerns that the FTC had overstepped its legal authority.

Israel Will Pursue Enemies Everywhere

JERUSALEM (AP) - Bolstered by U.S. support for Israel's strike against Syria, Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said Tuesday that his nation would not hesitate to attack its enemies wherever they are. Syria's president countered that the raid - targeting what Israel said was a Palestinian militant training camp - would only enhance his country's power in the Middle East.

N.Y. Philharmonic, Carnegie Call Off Deal

NEW YORK (AP) - The New York Philharmonic and Carnegie Hall abandoned plans Tuesday to merge two of the nation's most storied cultural organizations. In a statement, the groups said each organization was better off on its own. "It is clear that each institution has unique, undeniable core values, which could have been compromised," the statement said.

SPORTS

House approves gold medal for Jackie Robinson

WASHINGTON (AP) -- The House approved by voice vote legislation Tuesday to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Jackie Robinson, the late baseball star who broke the major leagues' color barrier.

A four-sport letterman at UCLA, Robinson became the major league's first black player when he played for the Dodgers on April 15, 1947. He retired after 10 years, six pennants and one World Series with the Dodgers and was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1962. He died in 1972.

"His remarkable life transcended baseball and helped to transform a nation in the process," said Rep. Richard Neal, D-Mass., who was urged to sponsor a bill after the Boston Red Sox held a symposium on Robinson's life last January.

Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., has sponsored identical legislation in the Senate, which is expected also to vote on the measure this month, congressional aides said.

Baseball commissioner Bud Selig issued a statement thanking the lawmakers for what he called an "appropriate tribute to a great ballplayer and an even greater human being."

TODAY IN HISTORY:

1780 Battle of King's Mountain

During the American Revolution, Patriot irregulars under Col. William Campbell defeat Tories under Major Patrick Ferguson at the Battle of King's Mountain in South Carolina.

Ferguson's Tory force, made up mostly of American Loyalists from South Carolina was the western wing of General Lord Cornwallis' North Carolina invasion force.

One thousand American frontiersmen under Campbell gathered in the backcountry to resist Ferguson's advance. Pursued by the Patriots, Ferguson positioned his Tory force in defense of a rocky, treeless ridge named King's Mountain. The Patriots charged the hillside multiple times, demonstrating lethal marksmanship against the surrounded Loyalists.

Unwilling to surrender to a "band of banditti," Ferguson led a suicidal charge down the mountain and was cut down in a hail of bullets.

After his death, some of his men tried to surrender, but they were slaughtered in cold blood by the frontiersmen, who were bitter over British excesses in the Carolinas.

The Tories suffered 157 killed, 163 wounded, and 698 captured. Col. Campbell's force suffered 28 killed and 60 wounded.

SAFETY TIP:

Transportation of Personnel in Cargo Trucks

- The number of passengers must not exceed the number that can be seated.
- Trucks used to transport personnel must be equipped with seating securely anchored, have a rear tailgate, a guardrail and a safety strap.
- Passengers will not stand in cargo area and will keep their arms or legs inside the truck body, unless necessary to assure force protection.
- Personnel will load and unload from the rear and use steps to dismount.
- Vehicles transporting personnel will not be the last vehicle in a convoy.

Chaplain's Thought for the Day:

Green and Tall

A forest is full of many different kinds of trees-- they are all sizes and shapes and shades of color. It is hard to imagine a pine tree wishing it was an oak, or a fir tree envying the birch its white bark. Instead, each tree catches raindrops and reflects the sunshine in its own way.

Like the trees in the forest, we each have our own unique beauty and talents to offer. But it is so easy to overlook our own gifts.

We get fooled by what looks good and forget that all human beings have some weaknesses and pain, just like we do. If we believe in ourselves we will grow green and tall.